
4 October 1954

Mr. Dulles wishes to see re
the attached.

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MEMORANDUM FOR: DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Earth Satellite Vehicle (ESV)

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1. As a result of the large missile development effort the launching of a small earth satellite in the next three years is almost certainly feasible. Although the Department of Defense has several satellite projects in planning stages, their mission would not justify accelerating satellite development without an outside, high level requirement. The capability of the Soviet Union and the United States of placing in orbit a satellite to collect basic scientific data is approximately the same.

2. Because the satellite will be the greatest scientific advancement since the hydrogen bomb, the United States should do everything possible to gain the prestige of this achievement. The first satellite should be launched in a peaceful setting not only to provide the greatest psychological warfare potential but also to facilitate the launching of future, more elaborate satellites.

3. The International Geophysical Year, 1957-58, offers a unique opportunity. It would provide the United States with maximum favorable publicity, an international setting, worldwide scientific cooperation, a clearly established peaceful motive, and a reaffirmation of Free World scientific values and methods.

4. If we are to have a satellite by 1957 the requirement must be established in the next month or two. If you concur,

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I suggest that I arrange informal talks with Mr. Donald Quarles, Department of Defense, and Dr. Allen Waterman, National Science Foundation. The Department of State should also be consulted.

5. If the above parties are favorable, I suggest you send the attached letter to the President recommending that he establish a tentative requirement for a small satellite to be launched in the International Geophysical Year, 1957-58. The letter should be accompanied by a brief discussion of the satellite (Tab A) and of the Soviet/U.S. stage of development (Tab B). The National Science Foundation would direct the project with the Department of Defense responsible for the development of the satellite.

Special Assistant to the Director
for Policy and Coordination

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Attachment:

Draft Letter to the President
with Tabs A and B.